

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

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AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 9182

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, AF, IN

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH GOP MINSTATE ON SOUTH ASIAN MATTERS

REF: NEW DELHI 12171 AND 12242 (NOTAL); STATE 207088

AND 208615 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. GOP MINSTATE WAS INFORMED OF PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO PRIMIN GANDHI REGARDING INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY OF PAKISTAN AND CONCERN OVER DEVELOPMENTS ON PAK-AFGHAN BORDER. MINSTATE ACCUSED AFGHAN GOVERNMENT OF TRYING TO TELL GOP WHAT IT OUGHT TO DO ON PAK TERRITORY; PAKISTAN WOULD NOT BE COWED. MEANWHILE, HE SAW REPATRIATION OF PERSONS AMONG PAKISTAN, INDIA AND BANGLADESH AS PROCEEDING PRETTY SATISFACTORILY ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT SLOWER THAN CONTEMPLATED. HE RE-AFFIRMED THAT GOP WAS SET ON THE COURSE OF NORMALIZING AND IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH INDIA. END SUMMARY.

1. IN COURSE OF MY MEETING OCTOBER 23 WITH AZIZ AHMED, GOP MINSTATE FOR DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, I SAID I THOUGHT HE WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW OF AN EXCHANGE IN DELHI LAST WEEK BETWEEN AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN AND PRIMIN GANDHI. MOYNIHAN HADTOLD MRS. GANDHI OF A MESSAGE HE HAD FOR HER FROM PRESIDENT NIXON. IT WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT WE WERE PLEASED, FOLLOWING THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT DURING THE BHUTTO VISIT THAT THE INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY OF PAKISTAN IS A CORNERSTONE OF AMERICAN POLICY, WHEN THE INDIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON STATED IT WAS EVEN MORE

A CORNERSTONE OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY. ALSO THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS CONCERNED THAT DEVELOPMENTS ON THE AFGHAN BORDER NOT LEAD TO DIFFICULTIES FOR PAKISTAN; AND HE HOPED INDIA WOULD SHARE THAT VIEW, IT BEING FUNDAMENTAL TO THE PEACE OF SOUTH ASIA.

2. AHMED LISTENED CAREFULLY AS THE PAK NOTE-TAKER MADE AN EFFORT TO CATCH EVERY WORD. IN RESPONSE AHMED'S QUERY AS TO WHAT PRIMIN GANDHI HAD RESPONDED, I SAID MERELY THAT SHE HAD REMARKED THAT THE INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY OF PAKISTAN WAS INDEED A CORNERSTONE OF INDIAN POLICY. (AHMED DID NOT PRESS ME ON WHAT MRS. GANDHI MIGHT HAVE SAID ON THE AFGHAN MATTER, HAND I WAS SPARED HAVING TO RESPOND ON THAT SUBJECT.) I SAID I THOUGHT THE FACT OF THIS EXCHANGE WAS INTERESTING AND PRESUMED PRIMIN BHUTTO WOULD LIKE TO KNOW OF IT. AHMED AGREED AND SAID HE WOULD CALL IT TO PRIMIN'S ATTENTION PROMPTLY.

3. I ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS, NOTING THE RECENT QUESTION CONCERNING GOP ROAD-BUILDING IN THE MOHMAND TRIBAL TERRITORY. AHMED SAID THE GOA HAD TOLD THE PAK AMBASSADOR IN KABUL DURING THE PAST WEEK THAT THE ROAD-BUILDING ACTIVITY COULD HAVE "DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES." HE SAID THE GOP WAS GOING AHEAD WITH THIS WORK. IT WAS ON PAK TERRITORY AND WHAT WAS DONE THERE WAS PAKISTAN'S BUSINESS. RESPONDING MY QUERY, AHMED SAID THE ROAD-BUILDING PROJECT HAD BOTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGIC ASPECTS. I ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT ADEQUATE ARRANGEMENTS EXISTED BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN FOR A QUIET AND RATIONAL DIALOGUE TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THEM ON PROBLEMS SUCH AS HAD ARISEN DURING THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. AHMED RESPONDED THAT THE AFGHANS HAVE SHOWN NO DESIRE TO HAVE SUCH A DIALOGUE. GOP WANTS TO HAVE GOOD AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS, BUT GOA IS MAKING IT HARD. FOR EXAMPLE, HE WENT ON, KABUL HAD THOUGHT THE GOP WAS IMPLICATED

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IN THE RECENT COUNTER-COUP PLOT; GOP HAD REJECTED THAT ALLEGATION. GOA HAD GONE ABOUT MAKING CLAIMS REGARDING "PUKHTUNISTAN" AND EVEN PAK BALUCHISTAN. NOW THEY WERE MAKING DEMANDS REGARDING ROAD-BUILDING IN PAK TERRITORY. AS AHMED SAW IT, THE GOA WAS GIVING NO OPENING TO THE GOP. "IF THEY GIVE TROUBLE, WE'LL TAKE CARE OF IT."

4. I CAME BACK TO THE QUESTION OF ADEQUATE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN GOP AND GOA. I RECALLED PRIMIN BHUTTO'S MENTIONING TO ME A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO THAT HE WAS THINKING OF MAKING A PERSONAL TRIP TO KABUL BEFORE HIS US VISIT. THAT HAD NOT WORKED OUT BUT I WONDERED IF

ANY THOUGHT WAS NOW BEING GIVEN TO SENDING SOME SPECIAL EMISSARY TO KABUL FOR FRANK TALKS WITH AFGHAN LEADERSHIP. AHMED INDICATED THAT NO SUCH EFFORT WAS NOT UNDER WAY BUT SAID IT COULD BE CONSIDERED.

5. TURNING EASTWARD, I ASKED HOW THE THREE-SIDED REPATRIATION WAS GOING. AHMED SAID HE THOUGHT IT WAS GOING GENERALLY WELL ALTHOUGH SLOWER THAN HAD BEEN HOPED. HE HAD CALLED TO THE ATTENTION OF FONMIN SWARAN SINGH IN NEW YORK THAT PAK POWS WERE BEING REPATRIATED AT SLOWER PACE THAN CONTEMPLATED WHEN DELHI AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED. INDIANS HAD CLAIMED TRANSPORT DIFFICULTIES; AHMED THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE NOGHING MORE THAN THAT. HE SAID BENGALLEES WERE LEAVING PAKISTAN AT THE FAIRLY RAPID RATE ANTICIPATED AT DELHI. AHMED DECLINED OPPORTUNITY TO EXPATiate ON PROBLEMS THAT MAY HAVE COME UP IN MOVING "NON-BENGALLEES" FROM BD TO PAKISTAN, STATING MERELY THAT MOVEMENT, ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT SLOW, WAS WORKING FAIRLY SATISFACTORILY. THIS PART OF CONVERSATION CONCLUDED WITH AHMED REAFFIRMING THAT GOP WAS SET ON THE COURSE OF NORMALIZING AND IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH INDIA. HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO "NEXT STEPS" AFTER EOMPLETION OF PRESENT REPATIRIATION, BEGINNING WITH SOME SOLUTION OF "THE 195." SOBER

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